

I am in favor of this petition for rule making which would remove element 1 from the tests for the general and the extra class amateur license. As the Report & Order, WT Docket No. 98-143, Released Dec. 30, 1999 mentioned, the only reason the FCC kept element one was the international treaty requirements. Now that that requirement has gone away, and also the fact that the FCC said that code testing serves no regulatory purpose, it is time to remove element 1 from the tests.

Some people claimed that the code tests kept bad operators from ham radio. And that reducing the code test speed would allow poor operators onto the HF bands thus ruining them. That didn't happen, as new operators learned good practices fairly quickly. Also, at least in my area, the operators heard on the 2 meter ham band's repeaters do not sound like CBer's. Conversely, there were bad operators on HF before restructuring. Not that many, but there were some on frequencies like 14313 KHz. And all had passed the 13 or 20 wpm code test.

I would suggest an informal gentlemen's agreement to preserve the old novice code sub-bands (or pieces thereof) for hams who wish to take up morse code operation.